



We've Got People on the Inside: An Amazing Partnership!





The Need



- ❧ All offenders committed to IDOC for two or more years, except those serving life sentences, take the TABE to determine their academic level.
- ❧ Statewide, 13,913 offenders were TABE tested, of those tested 5,207 individuals (37.4%) scored below the 6th grade level.
- ❧ 1,727 individuals are housed at the Danville Correctional Center.
- ❧ According to the Danville Correctional Center- Adult Ed. Dept., ~60 ABE students and 72 ASE students are being served, with ~100 more individuals waiting to be served.

Timeline- A Year In Review.



- ❧ March 2017-Brainstorming meetings with David Harris, Director of College Programs at DCC (The Liaison); Meetings with Chaplain Christopher Easton to start process of clearance.
- ❧ April 2017- Official proposal made to start peer tutoring at IDOC- Danville Correctional Center.
- ❧ May-Nov- 2017 Multitude of meetings with Warden Calloway, Asst. Warden Larson, Chaplain Christopher Easton, and David Harris to establish plan of action and work on logistics of implementing such a program.
- ❧ November 2017- Recruitment of tutors starts (flier)
- ❧ December 2017- Prison training with Chaplain Easton, TB test, finger printing, and pictures for ID badges.
- ❧ March 2018- First tutor training (15 hours) complete for 24 peer tutors; Orientation for first group of learners

Timeline- A Year In Review.



∞ April 9, 2018- WE DID IT!!!
First tutoring session takes
place (FINALLY!)

Requirements for Clearance

- ❧ Application
- ❧ Criminal background check
- ❧ Employment history
- ❧ Fingerprinting
- ❧ TB test (yearly)
- ❧ Drug screen
- ❧ Explanation of all marks, scars, and tattoos

Prison Training



- ❧ Chaplain Easton- Supervisor of Volunteer Programs
 - ❧ Shoes to wear
 - ❧ Trading and Trafficking- You CANNOT give anything to an inmate, not even something as seemingly minute as a piece of gum.
 - ❧ No phones, smart watches, gum, or anything else allowed into the prison.

Program Goals



- ❧ Help learners increase reading and math skills
- ❧ Help learners prepare for acceptance into DCC ABE/HSE classes (long waitlist – black hole?)
- ❧ Provide tutors with meaningful contribution opportunities
- ❧ Build upon the strong relationship between DOC and DACC

Program Overview



- ∞ Total # of tutors- 52
- ∞ Total # of learners- 155
- ∞ # of tutors residing in DCC- 28
- ∞ # of learners residing in DCC- 37
- ∞ Average GLE gain- +2.19
- ∞ DCC Average GLE gain +1.59

Program Overview



- ❧ Formal tutoring: Tutors meet with learners with a DACC representative present.
 - ❧ 2x/week (Thurs/Fri 12:00 – 2:30)
 - ❧ Tutors and learners go to the classroom for one-on-one or small group learning.
- ❧ Informal tutoring:
 - ❧ Times are decided by the tutor and learner
 - ❧ Tutoring takes place on, “the wings”, and tutors track outside learning.

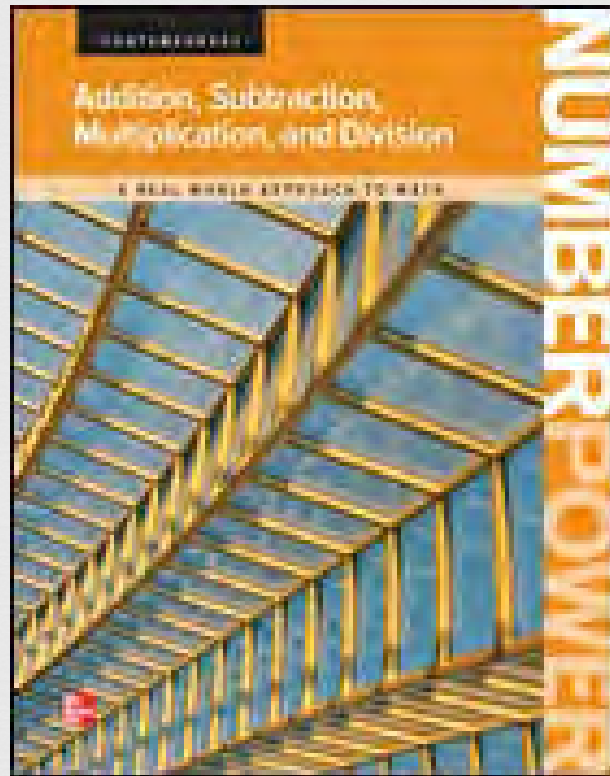
Materials



“Challenger is an eight-level integrated series that develops reading, writing, and reasoning skills through high-interest fiction and nonfiction stories relevant to today's adults.”

www.newreaderspress.com

Materials



“Each Number Power book targets a particular set of math skills with straightforward explanations, easy-to-follow, step-by-step instructions, real-life examples, and extensive reinforcement exercises.”

<https://www.mheducation.com>

Intricacies



- ❧ Official Memos
- ❧ Activity sheets/Call passes
- ❧ Commissary, visits, medical, etc.
- ❧ Allowable Items- Mini pencils, paper, books, workbooks, attendance sheets.
- ❧ Wear DACC clothing.

Some Accomplishments!



- ❧ 11 Post tested- EVERY learner post-tested showed at least one grade level gain, with an average of +1.59. (challenges coming to tutoring or transfers)
- ❧ 3 Learners were accepted to the ABE/ ASE classes at DCC.
 - ❧ Based on length of time remaining of sentence
 - ❧ Waiting list
 - ❧ New (higher) post-test score
- ❧ In talks to award “good time.”

Why we do what we do.



- ❧ Inmates participating in correctional education programs were 28% less likely to recidivate when compared with inmates who did not participate in correctional education programs.
- ❧ The United States Sentencing Commission states that inmates with less than a high school diploma had recidivism rates of over 60%, while those with a college degree had a 19% recidivism rate.

Why we do what we do.



“Since I became a student of this program, my reading grade level has gone up from a 6.9 to a 9.6 within a few months. Now I am working on my math. I have confidence that with the help of this program I will reach my goal, which is to get my GED. So, I want to thank all the people that played a part of making this program happen. May God bless all your kind hearts.”

-Jose Garcia, B-78906

Why we do what we do.



“I like this classroom. I’m learn[sic] to write letter[sic] to my family. I’m learning how to read. Thank you for having this class.”

-Rafael Berrios, N-12797

Why we do what we do.



“I am a participant as a learner and by getting the help that I need, my scores have increased from a 4.3 to a 6.6. Continuing in this program will surely help me achieve my goal of passing my GED.”

-Edward Elias, K-77632

Why we do what we do.



“Trust is a rare luxury not readily available for those housed in carceral environments. To be given the privilege to aid in shaping the academic development of another person, is to be acknowledged as possessing value.”

-Raphel Jackson, B-70090

Common Misconceptions:

Misconception

- ❧ Prison is a sad/somber place to be.
- ❧ All inmates are just trying to scam the system.
- ❧ It's easy.
- ❧ Once you're in, you're good.

Reality

- ❧ There are good times to be had, even in prison.
- ❧ Most inmates are trying to focus on their educational goals.
- ❧ It takes a lot of work, forethought, planning, and being uncomfortable
- ❧ You still have to be smart and aware.

And repeat...



The concept is simple: train tutors to work with learners.

This model can be modified for any peer literacy partnership!

All you need is a group of tutors and a group of learners.

For example, train Kiwanis, Rotarians, and retired teachers to work with learners from HSE classes, group homes, community agencies, drug-rehab facilities, etc.

We absolutely needed a person on the inside to help with green sheets/passes, getting inmates, test scores, inside communication pieces like which days we couldn't come, etc.

In closing...



It wasn't easy.

It's well worth it.

Inmates may purposefully do bad so they can stay in the group.

It helps our Literacy grant numbers.

It helps the DOC AE numbers.

It helps DCC employees/environments.

It was nerve-racking.

Very, very rewarding and one of our favorite things to do

(we even have commissary cards!)

